2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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121 the historical time span consciously recognized by the natives, that is, five or six generations, and probably for a much longer period. I have tried to show how this is associated with the lineage system.

●105 At the same time it was clear that stability did not mean stagnation
121 in Tale social life. Nothing could be farther from the way of life of the Tallensi than a rigid regimentation of social behaviour. Observation of the lineage system in action suggested that its distinguishing characteristic, as a regulating factor in the social structure, was its tendency towards equilibrium. This operated in such a way as to leave room for continual internal adjustments in the social organization without endangering its long-term stability.

The tendency towards equilibrium is marked in every sector of Tale society and in the society as a whole; and it is clearly a result of the dominance of the lineage principle in the social structure. Looking at Tale society in this way has helped me to see how the social structure is built up and how its parts are integrated with one another. The factors that determine this equilibrium require further study. But for this a full analysis, firstly, of the economic organization, and secondly, of the religious system of the Tallensi is necessary.

It seems to me that the equilibrium in the social structure is made possible by the conditions of Tale economic life. The almost complete absence of economic differentiation, by occupation or by ownership of resources, and, in particular, the absence of both material and institutional possibilities for capital accumulation or for technical advance, mean that economic interests do not play the part of dynamic factors in the social structure. We do not find permanent social groupings or classes organized solely on the basis of common economic interests, nor do economic differences decisively influence the incidence of political power or of leadership in public affairs. This is one of the major distinctions between Tale society and more highly differentiated West African societies such as the Nupe[1] or European peasant societies. There are no rich peasants and poor peasants, no landlords and tenants, no craft specialists, public officials or money-lenders, among the Tallensi. Economic factors are neutral, so to speak, in relation to the social structure, the primary constitutive factors of which are genealogical, local, and ritual relations.

But if the equilibrium of Tale society is made possible by the economic structure, and if the lineage system is the chief mechanism of social organization by which it is maintained, the system of religious values is undoubtedly the supreme sanction of its existence. I have been able to give only an indication of this as there has not been space in this book for an extensive treatment of Tale religion. Ritual activities are so conspicuous and so frequent in Tale social life that I was bound to give a great deal of attention to them in the field. One cannot understand the springs of conduct among the Tallensi without a good knowledge of their religious values.

121 The structural equilibrium of Tale society is associated with its segmentary form, which I regard as a particularly important characteristic of the social structure as a whole. Elsewhere[2] Evans-Pritchard and I have

[1] Cf. S. F. Nadel, *A Black Byzantium*. [2] *African Political Systems*, Introduction.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Large-scale Framework of Tale Society

THE central subject of the first part of this analysis of Tale social structure was the lineage system.[1] Our attention was fixed on the permanent large-scale framework of the society in relation to which individuals behave primarily as members of corporate groups. We observed that according to native belief and usage this framework has maintained its form from time immemorial and must continue to do so as long as their social system lasts. Our data left little doubt that in fact the macroscopic social structure of the Tallensi has been highly stable in form for at least five generations and probably for many more. We found evidence, however, that a continuous process of adjustment in the grading of structural relations between the component units of the total social structure underlies its stable form. These adaptations take place in response to economic, structural, and religious stresses. Though they do not alter the established forms of corporate grouping by means of which Tale collective life is organized, they do affect the social relations of persons as individuals and as members of corporate groups. Nor can there be any doubt that they are inherent in the social structure; whatever sets them in motion at any given time or in any given sector of the society, they are made possible by the dynamic factors inherent in the constitution of the stable large-scale units of social organization. We saw that units of Tale social organization can only be defined by reference to the way in which they emerge in corporate action in relation to other like units, and not by mechanical criteria.

For convenience of orientation I shall here sum up the principal results of our previous study. The Tallensi[2] are typical of the great congeries of Mole-Dagbane-speaking peoples that occupy the basin of the Volta rivers in the French Ivory Coast and the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.[3] In race, speech, culture, social organization, and economy they constitute a completely homogeneous community of sedentary farmers. But there is no 'tribal unity' among the Tallensi in the ordinarily accepted sense of this phrase. They have no fixed territorial boundaries, nor are they precisely marked off from neighbouring 'tribes' by cultural or linguistic usages. They have no political unity in the sense of being uniformly and exclusively subject to a single, centralized tribal government (other than that imposed by the British

[1] *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, hereafter referred to as *Dynamics of Clanship*.

[2] Population (1931), approx. 35,000; density, approx. 170 per square mile.

[3] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. i.

[p. 1]

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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105 Colonial Government),[1] and no judicial or administrative machinery such as goes with a centralized form of government.[2]

The 'tribal unity' of the Tallensi is, in general terms, the unity of a distinct socio-geographical region forming a segment of a greater region of similar cultural type, economic organization, and social structure. This region can be demarcated only by dynamic criteria. The Tallensi have more in common among themselves, both in sentiment and in nuances of cultural usage, and closer social and politico-ritual bonds *inter se*, than the component segments of Tale society have with other like units outside what we have called Taleland. This characteristic of Tale society has a special relevance for the investigation we are undertaking in this book. For, like the network of clanship ties and the bonds of common custom and of politico-ritual association analysed in our first book, the web of kinship spreads far beyond the social frontiers of the Tallensi. This is one of the ways in which the field of inter-personal relations is congruent with the structure of relations between corporate groups among the Tallensi.

The principle of segmentary differentiation and the associated principle of dynamic coherence operate in every department of Tale social organization. We described in our previous work how the Tallensi are internally divided by a major cleavage into two clusters of clans, the Namoo clans on the one hand, and the Talis[3] clans and their congeners on the other. These two groups are distinguished by differences in their myths of origin, their totemic and quasi-totemic usages and beliefs, the politico-ritual privileges and duties connected with the Earth cult and the ancestor cult, and to some extent by their local distribution. The clans belonging to each group are more closely interlinked by clanship and politico-ritual ties than any one of them is linked to clans of the other group. But very close bonds of local contiguity, and of politico-ritual interdependence and co-operation in assuring the maintenance of the common interests of the society—peace and

[1] Since 1937, under the new system of local government introduced by the Administration, the Tallensi have a centralized Native Authority built up on federal principles and closely related to indigenous forms of political institutions. I am speaking, however, of the period prior to 1937. Moreover, the new political constitution has not yet been wholly integrated with the indigenous system of politico-ritual relations.

[2] This is further discussed in *African Political Systems*, ed. by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Introduction and pp. 239 ff.

[3] As explained in *Dynamics of Clanship* I use the following terminology for the sake of clarity: *Tallensi* (sing. *Talɔŋ*) means all the inhabitants of *Taleland*; *Tale* is the adjective derived from Tallensi and is used to refer to things common to all Tallensi. *Talis* (sing. *Talis*) is used both as a substantive and as an adjective to refer to the 'real' Tallensi, as the natives call them, who live on and around the Tong Hills. They are usually contrasted with *Namoos* (sing. and adj. *Namoo*) who are also Tallensi but a different section of the population. This nomenclature is artificial, though derived from native speech forms.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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the rule of custom, fertility of soil and of man, health and prosperity— unite the two groups. In particular, inter-personal ties of kinship and of affinity link the members of the two groups of clans to one another, so that practically every Namoo has kinsmen among the Talis and vice versa. 105●

These two groups of clans, we learnt, never combined for defence against or attack on neighbouring 'tribes'. Indeed, they were the traditional enemies of one another, and war sometimes broke out between Namoos and Talis in the Tongo area. But these wars were short and sharp. They were acute forms of internal dissension rather than wars as we understand the term, and they immediately set on foot actions to restore the *status quo ante*. Thus they served to emphasize the inescapable interdependence of the two groups.

The unity and moral solidarity of all the Tallensi emerge most conspicuously during the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. At these times the divergent interests that normally dominate the corporate actions of clans or groups of clans are set aside in obedience to ritual sanctions. A series of rites and ceremonies requiring the co-operation of both major groups of clans takes place, in which the greatest common interests and values of the whole society are dramatized and affirmed. The solidarity of the widest political community to which every Talaŋ belongs thus becomes temporarily supreme, and no intestine dissensions at other times can destroy it.

The Great Festivals bring out two points of special importance. They show, firstly, that the widest unified political community in which Tallensi participate is not a fixed group but a functional synthesis based on a dynamic social equilibrium. This equilibrium is maintained by the balancing against one another of like corporate units; by the play of the counterpoised ties and cleavages of clanship, kinship, and ritual allegiance; and through the agency of complementary politico-ritual-institutions. And secondly, they show that the whole system hinges on the complementary roles of two types of politico-ritual functionaries, chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadem*) and Custodians of the Earth (*tendaana*, pl. *tendaanam*). The office of chiefship (*na'am*) is considered to be characteristic of the Namoos, the tendaana-ship of the Talis and their congeners, but neither office is the exclusive prerogative of either group. The picture is further complicated by the existence of other politico-ritual offices, in particular among the Talis, connected with their cult of the External *Boyar*. The complementary functions of chiefship and tendaana-ship are rooted directly in the social structure, but are also validated by myths of origin and backed by the most powerful religious sanctions of the ancestor cult and of the cult of the Earth. The Namoos are believed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi who fled from Mampurugu many generations ago. Hence they claim remote kinship with the ruling aristocracy of Mampurugu. Their chiefship is derived from that of the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi, and this is

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization that emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or subclan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

4: Fortes and Fortes E-5 (1934-1936) 1936
FE11 Tallensi FE11

105 THE DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION. Tale domestic institutions are very elaborate, and the organization of domestic life is subject to a considerable range of variation due to such factors as the economic position, size and age of the unit, the temperament and character of individuals, the social status of the senior male members, the distribution of economic and ritual specialization (craftsmen, diviners &c.), and so forth. To evaluate the full influence of these factors requires a mass of statistical information which we have not been able to obtain as yet; we must be content with merely indicating its range.

Tale society is essentially democratic; but differences of wealth are prominent. Chiefs and headmen, in virtue of the services they command, cultivate greater areas than any commoner, own much more live stock and have twice and three times as many wives. Both in its structure and in the organization of its domestic life, a chief's compound conforms to the same cultural pattern as the compound of the poorest plebeian; but it is economically entirely atypical. In every settlement, also, there are a few men of wealth considerably above the average. They always have a sufficiency of food, even in the leanest years. Chiefs, headmen, and wealthy men have therefore been excluded from the discussion in this paper.

592 596 341 Tale social organization has a well-defined spatial basis. The unit of residence is a mud compound (*yir*—house) inhabited by a joint family consisting of a group of men of close patrilineal kinship, their wives and children. Its architecture is significantly correlated to the structure and organization of the joint family at the particular phase it has reached in its development. One compound in three—14 out of 40, to be exact—has two or more entrance gateways (*zamor*),[1] each corresponding to a completely self-contained dwelling, and independent social unit consisting of one or more households. The plural entrance compound represents a stage in the process of segmentation through which the joint family passes in the course of about three generations, and which ends in complete fission and the setting up of several independent compounds.

592 596 The main gate is always owned by the head of the joint family (*yirdaan*, owner of the house) the most senior (*kpeem*) of the group of

[1] Statistics quoted here and in subsequent paragraphs are derived from a sample of 40 compounds selected at random from a sociological census we made at Tongo.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

●105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space inside is divided into compartments by low walls. Livestock are kept in an open compartment near the entrance. The land lying between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

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[241]

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for 241 "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

Identification

The Kusasi (Kusae, Kusal, Kusale, Kusan, Kusase, Kussi, Kussassi) are a tribe of the Mossi-Grunshi branch of the Niger-Congo linguistic stock. They number about 93, 000 (1948), and are closely akin to the Nankanse.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with hoe cultivation and use of manure. The staple crop is millet, followed by sorghum. Also grown are yams, (important in the S), sweet potatoes, groundnuts, beans, cow peas, okra, and Cucumis melo. Animal husbandry is important; cattle (often milked by Fulani herdsmen), sheep, goats, horses, donkeys, dogs, chickens, and guinea fowl are kept.

Sex Division of Labor

Both sexes engage in agricultural work (proportions not specified).

Property

Uncultivated land is controlled by the local headmen, who give permission to clear new land. Individuals enjoy heritable usufruct without right of sale. Cowries are used as currency.

Inheritance is patrilineal, with the eldest surviving brother as the principal heir. However, the ElSo inherits personal belongings, the compound farm (younger sons inheriting bush farms), cowries (younger sons receiving smaller shares), and the compound itself (to which he returns).

Marriage

Marriages are arranged, often while the couple are children, by the heads of the respective compounds. A "placation gift" of beer and a guinea fowl and a bride-price of 2-5 cattle are paid to the head of the bride's household by the head of the groom's. The groom owes annual bride-service until the birth of his first child.

There is general polygyny, which may be sororal (but not with a consecutively born Si of Wi). The first wife is chief wife. Secondary unions are preferential with BrWi, forbidden with FaWi, inferentially allowed with FaBrWi.

Family

The residential unit, occupying a compound, is a fraternal joint family, although married sons may attach themselves to father's compound with a separate gate. Succession is by YoBr in order of seniority.

105

Residence

The patrilocal rule prevails. Sons before marriage live in a special hut in the compound of their Fa. After marriage they either remove to a new compound a few hundred yards away, or remain in one or more huts attached to the father's compound but with a separate gate. When the Fa dies, the ElSo returns to the parental compound--at least if the father's brothers have left.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy prevails.

There are totemic patri-sibs, presumably exogamous, but they bear ancestral rather than animal names. They are inferentially divided into segmentary patri-lineages. There is also strict matrilineal exogamy but apparently no corporate matrilineal kin groups. Witchcraft is transmitted in the female line.

Kinship Terminology (F from Funke, otherwise from Rattray)

Fa--ba, oba (F), mba (my Fa--F). Mo--ma, uma (F), mma (my Mo--F). Ch--bi. Da--bi-pugle. ElBr--ber, pita (F). YoBr--pito, ma (F). Si--tɔ, ton (F). YoSi--biare (F). Rattray gives tɔ for sibling of opposite sex. Hu--sid, dao (F). Wi--poa, pua (F), mpua (my Wi--F).

Avuncular and male-speaking nepotic terms are bifurcate merging or alternatively descriptive.

Cousin terms are of Hawaiian type, or alternatively descriptive.

Settlement Pattern

The Kusasi live in neighborhoods of dispersed homesteads, each consisting of a family compound. The huts have circular mud walls and conical (never flat) thatched roofs, and are grouped roughly in a circle around a cattle kraal with a mud wall connecting adjacent dwellings.

Community Organization

Each neighborhood is a patrilocal clan-community.

Local Government

There are local headmen, who are clan chiefs. Their functions are primarily ritual ones, though administrative duties have been recently assigned to them. Succession is patrilineal--by the next eldest Br, then the eldest classificatory son.

105

State

Political integration above the community level is apparently lacking.

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Rattray, R. S. The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland. 2 vols. Oxford, 1932. (Has considerable information).

105

Identification

The Namnam (Nabdam, Nabte) are a tribe of about 8, 000 (1921) of the Gurensi nation, which also includes the Nankanse and the Tallensi. Their language belongs to the Mossi-Grunshi branch of the Niger-Congo linguistic stock.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with hoe cultivation and use of manure. The staple crops are probably sorghum and millet, but beans, groundnuts, and probably also cow peas and sweet potatoes are also grown. Sheep, goats, cattle, chickens, some horses and donkeys, and probably also dogs and guinea fowl are kept.

Property

Land is allocated by local headmen, apparently in heritable usufruct and reverts to him when abandoned. A distinction between personal and family property is inferential. Cowries are incidentally mentioned.

Inheritance is patrilineal. By inference from the kindred Nankanse and Tallensi the preferred heir is ElSo for personal property, eldest surviving brother for family property.

Social Stratification

Slavery and debt slavery are inferential.

Marriage

Marriage involves "placation gifts" (cf. Tallensi) and a bride-price in cattle.

Polygyny is inferential. Each wife has her own hut.

Family

Fraternal joint families like those of other Gurensi tribes are inferential.

Residence

The patrilocal rule prevails.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy is inferential.

Marriage with any first cousin is inferentially forbidden.

There are patrilineal totemic sibs and segmentary lineages, each with a head. Lineages are exogamous, but sex relations and probably

marriage are not forbidden with persons of geographically and genealogically remote lineages of the same sib. Matrilineal exogamy also prevails, but there are no matrilineal kin groups.

Kinship Terminology

Fa--ba. Mo--ma. Ch--bi. So--dayɔ . Da--pɔvɔ -yɔ. Hu--ser. Wi--pɔv. ElBr--kpwɛm. YoBr--yebeg. Sibling of opposite sex--tɔ.

Avuncular and nepotic terms are basically of bifurcate merging type. Cousin terms are of Hawaiian, or alternatively of descriptive (Sudanese) type.

Settlement Pattern

The Namnam live in neighborhoods of scattered homesteads, each consisting of a group of round huts with flat mud roofs or conical thatched roofs arranged in a circle or oval and connected by a mud wall to form a compound.

Community Organization

The local group is basically a patrilocal clan-community, divided into "sections" consisting of localized lineages. Clitoridectomy is practiced.

Local Government

There are local headmen or clan chiefs (tengdana) with ritual functions. Unlike the other tribes of the group these headmen are sometimes women. Succession is decided by a soothsayer in consultation with the lineage elders.

State

There is a paramount chief of Dagomba origin, occupying a capital settlement. He receives annual tribute in crops. His authority has been enhanced by the British and was probably originally minimal.

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105

Identification

The Tallensi (Talansi, Tale, Talen, Talene, Talense, Talni) are a tribe of the Mole-Dagbane group of the Mossi-Grunshi branch of the Niger-Congo linguistic stock. They number about 35, 000 (1931) on 300 square miles. With them are included the closely kindred Namnam (Nabdam); Fortes and Manoukian report that the Nankanse (Gurensi) and Kusasi (Kusase) should perhaps also be grouped with them as a single unit of 170, 000 and Rattray says the same. The Tallensi were conquered by the British about 1911, after severe military resistance.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with use of human and animal manure on homestead plots and fallowing of more distant fields. The staple crops are millets of both an early variety (Pennisetum typhoideum) and a late variety (P. spicatum), followed by sorghum. A little rice is grown, and cacao is a recent cash crop. Subsidiary crops include peanuts (Arachis hypogea), Bambara beans (Voandzeia subterranea), cow peas (Vigna sinensis), geocarpa beans (Kerstingiella geocarps), sweet potatoes (Ipomea batatas), yams, maize, Gyandropsis pentaphylla, okra (Hibiscus esculentus), H. cannabinus, and H. sabdariffa. Animal husbandry is distinctly subsidiary. Goats, sheep, numerous chickens and guinea fowl, dogs, some cattle, and a few horses and donkeys are kept. Cows are milked, and milk is drunk curded. There is considerable gathering, some petty trade, and a little hunting and fishing.

Sex Division of Labor

Men do the animal husbandry and most of the agriculture, though women grow peanuts, help at planting and harvesting, and grow vegetable gardens. The women gather and engage in petty trade. Men hunt.

Property

The tengdana or ritual headman has a ritual relationship to the land, which is owned by minor lineages. Individual men hold plots in heritable usufruct, originally alloted by lineage heads; these rights are not subject to sale or rent.

Inheritance is patrilineal. Lineage property (farm land, livestock, and ancestral shrines) pass from the lineage head to his successor (ElBr, then eldest Br or BrSo) by seniority. Individually acquired property (grain, personal possessions, goats and fowls, personal shrines, and land acquired by a man's own effort) is inherited by sons. A woman's

cattle are inherited by her sons, other property being divided among her daughters. Men often lend and sometimes give land to SiSo.

Social Stratification

Slavery was formerly practiced, and there are pawns or debt slaves. There are individual differences in wealth, but no true social or economic classes. Slave status is not hereditary; children belong to the sib of their owner.

Marriage

There are three modes of marriage: (1) elopement with connivance of the girl's Mo or Si, gifts to her parents, and subsequent marriage payments; (2) arrangement between the heads of two joint families through an intermediary (pogosama), who is patrilineally related to the groom and also related to the bride, usually as a son of one of her female lineage mates; (3) infant betrothal, in which a rich man gives an advance on the marriage payments to a poor man for his infant daughter. The first mode is the commonest for a first wife. Marriage payments fall into three categories: (1) gifts at marriage, including fowls for sacrifice, (2) a "placation gift" at some time after marriage, consisting of fowls distributed among the elders of the bride's lineage, and (3) a bride-price, paid at a later date and often in installments, consisting of about 4 cattle or the equivalent in sheep or money. The bride-price is raised by the head of the groom's minor lineage and is paid to the head of the bride's minor lineage. That obtained for a girl should be used to secure a wife for her brother. There is also an obligation to do several days a year of agricultural bride-service for a number of years after the wedding.

Polygyny is general and preferred. About 40% of all married men are polygynous, but only 25% of those under 45. Each wife has her separate quarters in the homestead (her own hut). The senior wife is chief wife. Sororal polygyny is disapproved and rare, and the sororate is not customary. Levirate marriages are preferred with ElBrWi, allowed with YoBrWi, forbidden with FaWi, SoWi, WiMo, FaBrWi, and MoBrWi.

Family

A homestead or compound is typically occupied by a fraternal joint family, consisting of several brothers and/or half-brothers and their families. Often, however, the unit consists of a man and one or more sons or deceased brother's sons with their families. If a man lives with his Fa, he must use a separate gate to the compound.

Residence

Residence is patrilocal. An unmarried man occupies a room in his mother's quarters, and he brings his wife there, but is obligated to provide her soon with a separate apartment or compound. When his father dies, and oftentimes or usually before, a man establishes an independent homestead, usually but not always in same community.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy is the norm. Residence is never matrilocal, but is occasionally neolocal or avunculocal.

Marriage is forbidden with any first cousin. Exogamy (for sex relations as well as marriage) extends from the patri-sib to the patri-lineages of Mo and FaMo and to all known matrilineal relatives (but if matrilineal connection is discovered after marriage, the union is not dissolved). Marriage is common with a younger woman of an older wife's patri-lineage.

Descent is primarily patrilineal. Matrilineal kinship (soog) and exogamy are recognized, but there are no corporate matrilineal kin groups. Patrilineal kin groups are segmentary. There are exogamous patri-sibs (called "maximal lineages" by Fortes), consisting of descendants of a common ancestor 8-10 generations back; sex relations are forbidden with remoter members, though marriage is allowed. The sibs are divided into sub-sibs or lesser lineages, into minor lineages (the land-holding units), and into "minimal lineages" (the children of one man). Each sib and segment thereof has a head, its senior male, who has charge of the ancestral shrine. Politico-religious offices are vested in the sib. Groups at all levels are corporate units, and are known by the name of the common ancestor. Sibs are associated with totemic avoidances and common ancestor rituals; they are localized as clan-communities.

A possible survival of matrilineal descent is the fact that ritual blood-guilt contaminates a murderer's matrilineal kinsmen. Another is matrilineal exogamy. Maternal ancestors are as important to an individual as paternal ones.

Kinship Terminology

Fa--ba. Mo--ma. Elder sibling of same sex--bier; younger--pit. Sibling of opposite sex--tau. Ch, BrCh (w.s.)--bii. Half-sibling--sungo. Term for Wi extended to BrWi.

GrFa--yaab. GrMo--yaab-pok. GrCh--yaang. MoBr--aheb. SiCh (m.s.)--aheng. FaSi--ba-pok. Special term for MoSi, used for MoSiDa.

Sibling terms extended to FaBrCh and MoBrCh, also to MoSiCh and FaSiCh.

Settlement Pattern

The local community is a neighborhood of dispersed family homesteads, each consisting of a group of round huts with mud walls and conical thatched roofs (sometimes flat mud roofs) surrounded by a mud wall. Each community has a territory (teng), a section of sacred earth. A homestead is enclosed with a mud wall.

Community Organization

Normally the community is a patri-clan, either a localized sib, a segment of a sib (which has dispersed territorially), or (more commonly) two or more sibs linked together by a myth of remote kinship or by long residential propinquity. A clan, always associated with a place, may include members of two or more sibs, each with segments in another community. Clitoridectomy and circumcision are not practiced.

Local Government

Each community has a ritual head, the head of the resident sib or the senior lineage. These headmen are of two types--tengdana and na'am. The former are of old Tallensi origin; succession is strictly by seniority; the office is called "custodian of the earth" and involves observation of taboos, sacrifices to the Earth, and other functions to prosper the people. The na'am or "chiefs" are found in sibs of Mamprusi origin; they own locust-bean trees and hunting or fishing places; they are appointed by an elector; the office can be "bought," and any man in good standing can aspire to it. A chief has rain-making powers; a tengdana does not. Some clans have headmen of both types. Neither has significant administrative, judicial, or military functions. Chiefs wear a red fez. A chief appoints a group of titled elders, but they do not form a council.

State

There is no tribal organization, no form of central state. Some chiefs enjoy great prestige in other communities, but their functions are limited to their own.

Warfare

Hostility and punitive raids between communities are common, but war is uncommon. The spilling of blood is believed to desecrate the sacred earth.

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